(b) if so, the details of this innovative initiative; and

(c) by when this facility is going to be extended in all trains in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Telephone booths at the railway Stations

1967. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the operators of public telephone booths running on the railway stations have been asked to stop the functioning forthwith;

(b) if so, the reason therefor and whether Government are aware that most of the booth operators are disabled persons; and

(c) whether Government would review the decision, if any in the matter and whether the physically handicapped persons are given preference to operate the booths in the railway stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Instructions have been issued that physically handicapped persons who are presently running Subscriber Trunk Dialling/ International Subscriber Dialling/Public Call Office booths at railway stations and whose contracts are expiring and not due for extension as per contract may be allowed to continue and their contract may be extended after expiry upto 27.4.2007 provided their working is satisfactory. As per extent instructions, 25% booths have been reserved for physically handicapped persons.

Electrification of railway stations in Punjab

1968. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent by Government on electrification of railway stations in Punjab during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the names of railway stations electrified during the period; and

(c) the names of stations identified in Punjab for electrification in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Neither any expenditure was incurred by the Government on electrification of stations nor any station was electrified during the last three years in Punjab.

(c) As per existing guidelines, following two stations are identified for electrification during the year 2005-06:

1.Theh Qalandar Halt

2. Ajitgill Matta Halt

Manning of unmanned level crossings

1969. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have prepared any plan for manning unmanned level crossings in the country, particularly in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any criteria has been laid down for unmanned level crossings to qualify for manning;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the particulars of unmanned level crossings in Maharashtra which have qualified this criteria for manning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) On Indian Railway manning of unmanned level crossings is taken up based on criteria laid down for manning. As per existing criteria unmanned level crossings are categorized as Category I, II & III. Brief extract of existing policy criteria is given as under:

Category I : Clear visibility level crossings where Train Vehicle Unit (TVU) is more than 6000 AND Road vehicles more than 180.

Category II : Restricted visibility level crossings where TVU is more than 6000 AND Road vehicles more than 120.